Volume IV Chicago, Ill., January, 1928 Number 10

The Liberal

A Challenge!

"The challenge I fling to you is the greatest to which men have ever been invited to respond. It is the challenge to put off your gait of the mill-horse pacing his round; it is the challenge to live of your own motion, like free spirits as you are; it is the challenge to use institutions, instead of being used by them; it is the challenge to unseat things from the saddle of destiny and to seat there instead the human soul. Is it not worth sacrifices, if sacrifices be involved? Is it not worth effort, thought, imagination, faith? What in comparison are our petty quarrels about yours and mine? You and I alike own nothing but ourselves. Of that let us make ourselves masters; the rest will be added unto us."
—G. Lowes Dickinson.

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The Peoples Church

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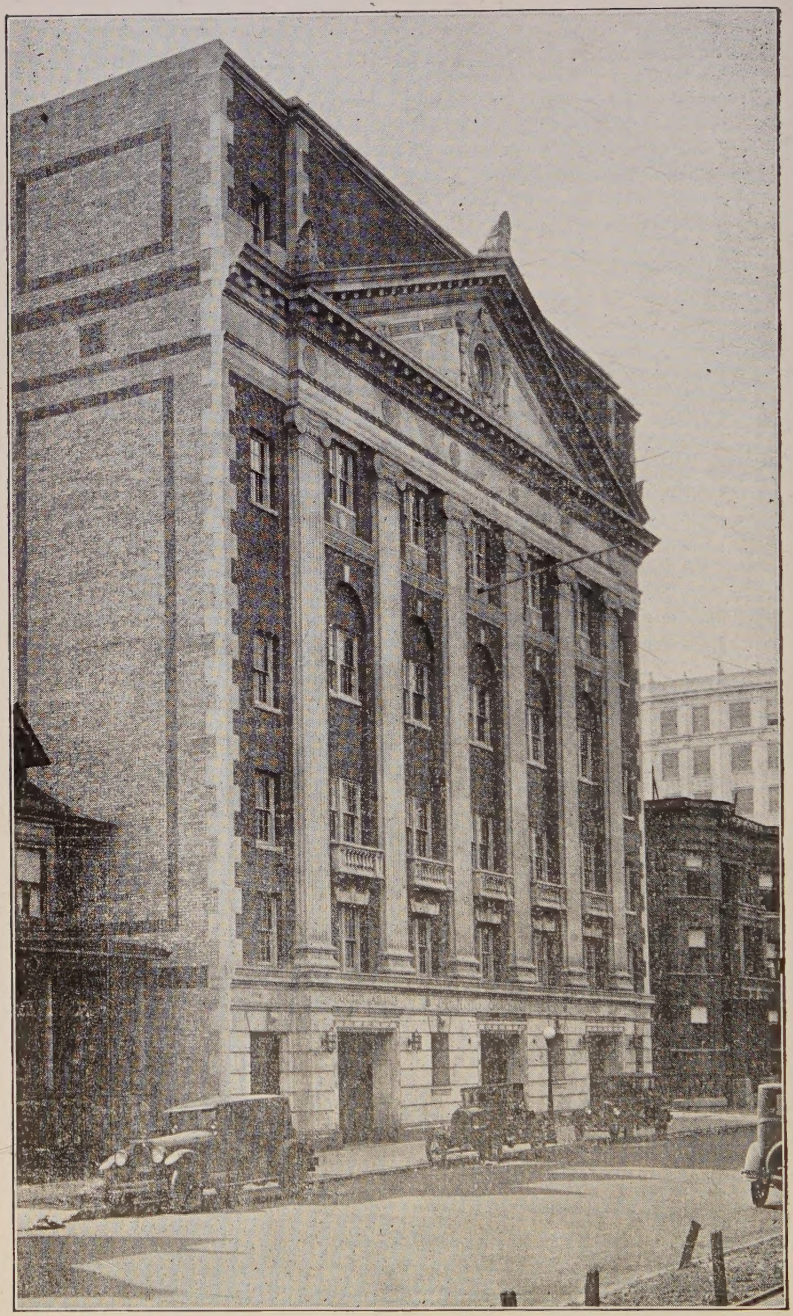

THE PEOPLES CHURCH OF CHICAGO

THE LIBERAL

Preston Bradley ..... Editor
Grace Thayer Bradley ..... Associate Editor

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Volume IV Chicago, Ill., January, 1928 Number 10

"COURAGE"

A Sermon by Dr. Bradley
Delivered in The Peoples Church Sunday, January 1, 1928.
Stenographically Reported

Almost from the very beginning of my ministry in this church I have used the first Sunday in the New Year as an opportunity for discussing in a simple and practical manner some of those things which have to do with making life what life ought to be. I have attempted to speak words of counsel, encouragement and comfort to those who, particularly at a time of the year which is evidenced by great demarkations, feel a depression of spirit and discouragement of soul, and who feel the need of attempting to find a source outside of themselves, outside their own capacity, to make life more meaningful and more beautiful for them; in consonance with this idea I am attempting once more to speak to this splendid audience in this church and the countless thousands out there in my radio audience. It becomes increasingly a challenge for me, as I attempt to analyze the whole structure of life, to say that which will be refreshingly inspirational in all that the word "inspiration" means at its best. Very frequently when we use the word "inspiration" we use it in somewhat of a disparaging sense; I have myself heard speakers refer to it in a somewhat flippant manner as being "O, the inspirational type," as though you could divorce completely the fine intellectual offerings of life from the inspirational of life, for all true intellectual achievement has invariably as its attendant great inspirational force; and those who are more highly evolved intellectually are always more deeply and fundamentally inspirational from their point of beauty and in their relationships with life.

So this morning, I don't attempt and I am not concerned about maintaining a reputation of any effort whatsoever toward that which is purely evolved philosophically or belongs to the realm of the predominantly intellectual; this is the time of life when we are taking stock of things; when retrospection is filling our minds, and most of us evidence an introspection that all the rest of the year we did not realize we possessed, and associated with this retrospection and this introspection there must come inspection. And it is this quality of inspection that I desire to bring to your thought as a hypothesis or foundation, rather, for what I choose to say upon Courage.

Bergson tells us "Time moves," and then when we stand apart philosophically and listen to these words of Bergson we wonder just what it is that moves. When Bergson says "Time moves" we must ask again "What is time?" What is time? Our years are little words, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty years —this little dwelling moment out of two great silences, this little cluster of the fraction infinitesimal of only a second in the great cosmic consciousness of Eternity.

What is time? Obviously, we can have no concept of time that is not conceived in terms of our own consciousness. The time-consciousness is the voice which authenticates our understanding of what time is. And that time-consciousness is based upon a great variety of experiences; all, of course, associated, as they inevitably must be, in some form of relationship to our own individuality.

There is properly no universe for you except the universe you know, there is properly no time for you except the time which you have personalized in the range of your own individualism. We can conceive the limitless only in terms of the limited. And it is only our experiences in the timely that verify for us timeliness; it is only the associations which are all ours and in which we have a sense of proprietorship that belongs predominantly to that time-consciousness of our own selves that our universe lies.

So, your universe is just You; nothing more, nothing less. That which has never been a part of you, for you does not exist; that which has never been identified with some intellectual or spiritual experience in your own personalities, for you has no existence. It is only when we increase and enlarge our conception of the consciousness of life, that the things which life has become a part of us.

Consequently, this whole question of Failure in life must be very largely an individual responsibility; and any intensification of the socializations of life so that there can be a delegation of individual responsibility to meet the responsibilities and realities of life is antagonistic to the highest expression of what constitutes life's greatest victory. And it is with the victories of life that I am concerned today. For I have accepted, my friends, as predominant in my philosophy —it saturates my whole philosophical point of view in religion —that life was made for Victory!

I see no quality anywhere in life's manifestations that evidences naturalness of defeat in life processes. Life at its highest and at its best is always victorious! It is the very nature, the very quality of life, the very natural aptitude for life is to accumulate and associate with the elements of victory. Consequently, where there is failure, there must be some violation of this law of Success and Victory. I don't use the term "success" in the idle way in which it is used by magazine editors, for instance, who predicate that success is only a matter of materialistic accumulation; but, I use "success" in terms that are higher and more lofty and more deeply significant, for no man is a success, either in the business world or any other, until the thing which he calls "success" has brought him such a deep and abiding consciousness of eternal values that he does not make the mistake or tragedy of false emphasis as to what is permanent.

The thing that makes for success is our concept of eternal values. Anchoring ourselves to things which pass away with the years is evidence that we have a transitory and inefficient standard by which we are moulding our lives.

And I know of no better time in all the year upon which to introduce into our lives a new standard by which we determine valuations than on this Sunday of the beginning of a New Year.

Now, like Gaul, that Caesar speaks to us about, all time is divided into three parts; and just for a moment we want to tarry in the presence of these three divisions. They are divisions which come most naturally; they do not require any intellectual effort to discover them. They are most platitudinous and somewhat bromidic,—and I despise platitudes and I hate bromides,—but all time divides itself into

these three general perceptions. The first is the past. The past, and no matter how we might want to believe the theory that the past does not matter, this thing we are always faced with, that the past does matter; and no matter how much we might want to escape this division of time, there is no escape. You can divide life up into little compartments and those little compartments be separated and distinguished and inter-related and co-ordinated to each other. Life is all a great unifying expression; and, yet, there is a tyranny of the past that no one need bow down to. The past always will be and always has been of tremendous importance to the present, but it is not a tyrant that we must bow down to or obey or that we must continually honor.

And so the first thing that I should say to the discouraged this morning would be this: Break with the tyrant of your past. No individual who feels that they have failed can ever succeed who permits himself to be the victim of mistaken years; the thing which will impede your moral and spiritual evolvement more than anything else will be a continual obeisance to that which is the past! And may I say in passing that there is no contribution which we can make to those who are seeking to recover from wasted years than by our refusing to ever recall to them that past.

Haven't you met people continuously who in the presence of some individual that was attempting to make a moral comeback, who was attempting to restage a triumphant entry into the drama of life, someone that had failed and failed badly, haven't you met the kind of individual that in the presence of such an attempted recovery has very frequently said to them, or to someone else, "Oh, well, what about their past?" And they always repeat that lie that there is no way to judge the future but by the past. That is a lie! It is not true. And it is a mistake for individuals who are trying to climb back into the good graces of decency and of honor to bow down to the tyranny of their past. And let me say as emphatically as I can say it, and let me repeat it, as I have repeated it again and again and again,—just as a radio letter which arrived at my study this week told me. It said "Dr. Bradley, on Sunday morning I cannot be in your church, but I shall be listening to the sermon, and the turmoil of my soul is such that I am not going to admit that you are preaching to anyone else but to me, and that the message of Courage is given to my heart, because life is all twisted for me."

And let me say it as vitally as I can, and as sympathetically as I can, and as effectively as I can say it: If you are trying to come back. IF YOU ARE TRYING TO COME BACK, turn your back first upon your own past, and don't let the deeds of yesteryear rob you of the inspiration of trying to do better in the tomorrow; and shun as you would shun a viper, no matter what their pretences might be—and what an age of pretence it is! Shun, as you would shun a viper, any one who would discourage you or interfere with your rehabilitation by holding up for you the specter of your own past.

As long as our soul's are deadened by past failures as long as our hearts are saddened by past mistakes, as long as remorse eats at the very fountain of inspiration, there can be no achievement, there can be no victory! Necessary as is remorse, necessary as is conscience, necessary as is memory, necessary as is all the past, stand in the Lordly dignity of your own New Year's resolution to be better and finer, and don't let anything prevent you!

That is the thing, my friends, that I saw most of all in this subject of Courage.

How can you have courage to go on if your sensibilities are

deadened by your past failures? How can you have courage to win if your heart is broken by what might have been? How can you dream if your sleep is disturbed by awakenings? How can you love, if that love must always be felt with the failures of older hates? How can you live life supremely beautiful and know that forever and forever the ghosts of our past sins must walk the halls of our habitation?

Don't let it! I know that society is in conspiracy against such a philosophy. Most of our so-called friends are obsessed with such a blighting thought. I know that you will face a conspiracy if you try to face life upon these terms that will be most discouraging; but, after all, are you living it for its social relationship and to meet standards of mob and mass formations, or are you living life in terms of inner excellency and a glow of supremacy that burns upon your little altar in its refusal to conform with the mass and mob and crowd idealism that is always vicious against rejuvenation? For the most difficult thing to overcome in life is the tragedy of having failed. The most difficult obstacle to overcome in life is the obstacle of having fallen, of having associated with your character the fact that you failed. There are psychological pressures that come from the outside of your own hearts that prevent a renaissance, and these psychological factors you must face, you who are failing and who are sorrowing and who are tragically despondent in your great struggle to live life in terms of Beauty and of Truth.

And the next division of time is the present. And the most glorious thing I know about the present is that the present eternally establishes the third division, the future. Your present, this moment, this hour, that is the thing that crystallizes the next one.

How grateful I am for a continual illumination of that Truth, that our hells and our heavens are all of our own making, and neither come from a reward nor a punishment, but are the natural followings of our own doings. A pathetic truth, a sad truth, and yet a glorious truth! For, if my past may have brought me to this moment of failure and discouragement and sorrow and decay, so this present can bring me to another moment, and that moment will be exalted with victory.

Don't you see what I mean?

Admit the failure of the present, and your weakness of the present, and the fact that you have fallen, admit all that, remember the supreme fact is you have the present. That is the division of time, which is of sovereign importance, and that present you can transform into creative qualities that will guarantee you a future vibrant with the sense of victory.

We have all had to do that who have been able to do anything. We have all had to have that sense of failure and defeat and collapse. And then there comes this thought, that I am painting pictures every day for my little "gallery of memory," and those pictures are never painted in the past; they are always painted in the present,—always in the present! And I am painting these pictures in my little gallery of life, and the future will never let them perish, and there they will live, a glow of brilliant beauty, a sunset of golden purple, the highest expression of infinite beauty. That picture is there. And then here is the storm, that symbol of your moral collapse. When fresh and triumphant you pass over the blackness where you wallowed with the swine. That picture is there too. And the future is not going to let that picture go. And I must walk my walk of life through eternity.

And the question is: What kind of pictures are you going to paint? That is the supreme ques-

tion. What kind of pictures are you painting? That is the value of the present; that is the value of Now. Now! Because, the best of it is that you can take your palette—

Don't you know it is New Year?

Don't you know it is New Year?

You can take your palette and you can scrape off all the dry paint of the years, and you can clean the brushes of life into the sweetness of new ideals, and you can stand before the canvas that has not a single design on it, that has not a single motif there, and you can begin all over again.

That is the glorious thing to me about New Year. You can begin all over again.

And when I think of the great lives that did, I think what a pity it is for us to live at less than its highest. What a pity it is! Oh, young men and young women here this morning or listening, what a pity! Let us eliminate all this talk about religion or theology and all the things that separate us; forget I am a preacher; forget this is a church. Just let me talk to you as a human being, and listen to my question, my exclamation. What a pity! What a pity to waste the years! I wish I had some of mine back. There is no way that I can tell you sufficiently the tragedy of wasting the years! And now you have got a new chance, and the canvas is all spotless and the leaf is all white. What are you going to do about it? What are you going to paint? Storm? Failure? Chaos? Sin? What are you going to do? It is your problem! It is your question.

I look at the great lives of the past, the men and women who have done things. "Done things" —I am not talking about big things in the world of finance; I am talking about women like Florence Nightingale, men like David Livingston, Sir Wilfred Grenfell.

Sacco wrote to his son just before he died, "Take your mother, boy, out into the world, and always help where help is needed; help the poor, the fallen, the crushed, help the struggle of labor; help, always help."

Judge Gary died and in his will he said, "I insist that my heirs and their heirs never loan a dollar and never go security without the very best of security to help any one, even members of my own family."

Sacco died. Gary is dead!

Will you judge for yourself, for comment is unnecessary.

Sir Wilfred Grenfell, without hope of reward of money or land, landed upon the Labrador coast and gave his life to help diseased fishermen.

Mary, the apple woman of London, who when the plague settled upon the city of London, royalty left under cover of the night, vanished in the dark to let the London poor die, but Mary, the apple woman, immortalized herself, for she went about nursing and comforting the sick, and today there is a monument to her braveness.

Oh, my friends, for 1928 live life on these terms.

Sometimes I get so—Oh, I wish I had a description for my emotions. I just feel so much as though I was wasting mine when I read a book like Katherine Mayo's "Mother India;" when I see the unrest and the sorrow and the suffering of Russia, China, Japan, struggling in the birth pangs of a new idealism and misunderstanding on the part of the occidental world; when I see what hard time Brotherhood and Love and Peace are having in this world; when I see the power of money, fame; when I see the tyranny of it all in the crushing of the spirit of man, I feel as though I would like to tear this robe from my shoulders and the complacency of a respectable atmosphere with all the sense of security, and I feel I would like to go to India and help; I would like to go to Russia and help; I would like to find the place in America that is lowly and despised and rejected, and help.

He said "I come not to call the

righteous, but sinners,"—sinners to repentance.

And I am weary of it all. I feel as though at times I should like to be a crusader again, on fire and aflame, in behalf of all the weak, the despised, and the broken and the ruined lives of the world.

You are so eminently respectable. Life is so easy with you. There are three hundred thousand men out of work in Chicago today; there are hundreds and hundreds of millions and children suffering from the cold! You gulp your expensive liquor and smoke your great cigars, and you squander and squander. Don't you know there will be a day of reckoning?

Don't you know there will be a day of reckoning?

Don't you know there will be a day of reckoning, when little fingers will point at you? Wasteful!

Can't we do better in 1928? Can't we?

Oh, I would like this church, I would like this Peoples Church, life of my life and soul of my soul,—I should like to see it with the spirit of adventure, not afraid, but filled with the spirit of great adventure and crowd these walls to over-flowing, bursting with men and women seeking for the Light.

That is my New Year's message.

Will you help me in the adventure?

Will you help in the adventure?

Will you help this Church to be on the side of everything that is fine and noble and adventuresome and splendid and against all tyranny?

Will you help us touch human lives as never before?

Will you help us?

And to you who are discouraged—and this is my final sentence. You who are discouraged, come on now, let us start all over again.

And someone hearing me this morning on the radio whose heart is being eaten out by remorse, never mind; we will start all over again. And I don't care what the world says about you, and I don't care what your past has been, as long as I have any breath left, as long as I have any body, from this pulpit I am going to help you. I am going to help you, or I am going to leave it. One or the other. And the new year that is ahead of me is going to be a year when I am going to give the best that I have to the people,—The only resolution I have made—my best! I am going to give my best!

I want to keep my body strong and my brain active and my heart loving, because I am going to preach "clean cut and clear through," and I am going to be adventuresome as I have never been adventuresome before. I am going to see, as the years are passing by, I am going to try and make my life count—not about fame! Oh, that is the cheapest of the lot, fame! No!

So, this is my last sentence, and I like this sentence:

"Have you come to the end of your rope? Tie a great big knot in the end and hang on!"

THE RADIO MAIL BAG

The Editor of our "Radio Mail Bag" has long been absent from her post, owing to her illness since early in December. However if her improvement continues now that it has begun, she promises her usual articles soon, perhaps in our February number. Now she desires to thank the many friends in our Radio Circle who have sent such kind expressions for her health in their letters,—such cheering helpful messages. We have both appreciated them very deeply and are truly grateful for such kind loving thoughts.

The Editors.

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REGULAR EVENTS

School of Religious Education—Sundays, 9:30 a. m., Channing Hall.

Woman's Club—Every Monday.

Men's Forum—Second Monday evenings, Channing Hall.

Young People's Club—1st and 3rd Tuesday evenings in Channing Hall.

Church Trustees Meeting—Second Monday evenings.

THE UPTOWN PLAYERS

Another great success was scored by the Uptown Players, January 25 and 26 when they presented "So This is London," a three act farce under the direction of Miss Patricia O'Bryan, who appeared in the same play during a long run in New York under direction of Geo. M. Cohan. Channing Hall was filled both nights with an appreciative audience.

Three one act plays will be the offering for February—"For the Love of Pete" and "Cabbages," under the direction of Miss Beatrice Jorden, and "The Monkey's Paw," a story in three scenes, directed by Mr. James Griffin. These will be given February 28 in Channing Hall.

THE WOMAN'S CLUB

The pages of the calendar seem to turn rapidly for the Woman's Club. The holidays are already forgotten, the Bazaar is a thing of the past, although its success will be talked of for a long time to come, and be put down in the club annals as a guide for future achievement; even another page has been turned with the annual "Mid-Season Luncheon" which took place in Channing Hall January 23 and was a delightful day throughout. The luncheon was followed by a musical program furnished by the "Elena Moneak Trio" from the Woman's Symphony Orchestra. The Club flower, pink carnations, and tall pink candles were used for table decoration, while the platform was dressed with spring flowers. This "Mid-Season Luncheon" is always a gala day for the Woman's Club. Most of the members entertain guests, and usually it is the occasion of not a few Spring hats making their debut.

January 9 witnessed one of the most interesting programs of this season when Mrs. Minna Schmidt gave her lecture on "Three Thousand Years of Woman's Dress through History and Literature," illustrated with her famous wax figurines, nearly a hundred of them, each about a foot high exquisitely fashioned and dressed according to the character they represented. In the Educational Dept. Jan. 16, Mrs. O. E. Foldvary gave a very interesting review of "Red Skies At Morning" by Margaret Kennedy. Jan. 30 Miss Meta Brand presented an excellent program on the "Story of American Art."

Philanthropy work is never given publicity—but—it may well be said that our Philanthropic Dept., under the chairmanship of Mrs. C. L. Roberts quietly and effectively carries on the work of the helping hand, constantly calling upon and seeking those in need of encouragement and help. Many pages could be filled with the splendid work this department of the Church is doing, and it should be loyally supported from all sides.

Now the forthcoming event which is keeping every one on the qui-vive is—in common parlance—"Stunt Day," when home talent will have full swing. On Mondays in Channing Hall one finds, before and after Club sessions, various groups in corners or behind closed doors in the Kindergarten room, planning or rehearsing amid much whispering and laughter their special act for this altogether original event. "Stunt Day" will celebrate St. Valentine's on Feb. 13. It will be worth seeing!

G. T. B.

CHURCH NEWS

The following persons united with the church on the first Sunday in January:

Mrs. Anna Barber, 7207 W. Adams St., Forest Park, Ill.

Miss Jeanette W. Boe, 5102 Glenwood Ave.

Mrs. Winifred Boone, 4618 Kenmore Ave.

Miss Eleanor A. Brennauer, 1653 Foster Ave.

Miss Dalna Brown, Franklin Park, Illinois.

Mrs. John Jenkins, 5246 Kenmore Ave.
Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Levy, 2752 Ainslie St.
Miss Jennie Ludwig, 4724 N. Bernard St.
Mr. Sam Marchese, 167 W. Schiller St.
Mrs. Florence Meyer-Stull, 1712 Estes Ave.
Mrs. Bertha Schellenger, 1323 Albion Ave.
Miss Dorothy Schellenger, 1323 Albion Ave.
Mrs. Elizabeth Schmidt, 4741 N. Washtenaw Ave.
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur E. Strong, 3822 N. Kedzie Ave.
Mr. A. H. Utterberg, 3324 N. Clark St.
Miss Grace Young, 167 W. Schiller St.

Dr. Bradley made the following appointments during December:

Dec. 1 — Address, Woman's Ideal Club.
Dec. 2—Address, Radio Station KWY.
Dec. 3 — Saturday Evening Club.
Dec. 4 — Sermon, Peoples Church.
Dec. 4—Memorial Sermon, East Chicago, Ind.
Dec. 5—Address, Teachers' Institute.
Dec. 5 — Faculty Meeting, Church School.
Dec. 6—Address, Minneapolis, Minn.
Dec. 6—Address, Kiwanis, Minneapolis.
Dec. 7—Address, Milwaukee, Wis.
Dec. 8—Address, New England Cong. Church.
Dec. 9—Address, Mt. Morris Kiwanis.
Dec. 9—Address, Mt. Morris College.
Dec. 11 — Sermon, Peoples Church.
Dec. 11—Afternoon, Address Hawley Memorial Service.
Dec. 11—Evening, Address La Grange Sunday Evening Club.
Dec. 12—Board Meeting Peoples Church.
Dec. 12—Meeting, Laymen's League.
Dec. 12 — Address, Masonic Lodge.
Dec. 13—Address, Polo Woman's Club.
Dec. 15—Address, St. Louis, Mo.
Dec. 18 — Sermon, Peoples Church.
Dec. 20—Address, Milwaukee, Wis.
Dec. 22 — Christmas Party, Church School.
Dec. 25 — Sermon, Peoples Church.
Dec. 27—Address, Laymen's League, Des Moines.
Dec. 27—Address, Masons, Des Moines, Ia.
Dec. 28—Address, Cedar Rapids, Ia.
Dec. 29—Sermon, St. John's Day, Consistory Cathedral, Chicago.

Funerals

Dec. 9—Mr. Samuel May. Interment Waldheim.

Dec. 12—Mrs. Emma D. Moore. Interment Rosehill.

Dec. 12—Mrs. Frank Charleston. Interment Rosehill.

Dec. 22—Mrs. Helen Humphreys. Interment Memorial Park.

Dec. 31—Mrs. Martha W. Dalton. Interment Monroe, Wis.

Weddings

Dec. 5—John P. Burita and Helen Carmen.

Dec. 22—John A. Councilman and Sarah Mildred Powell.

Dec. 24—Harold Manning and Francis Norton Jackson.

Dec. 24—Roy Lill and Vera Zunistien.

Dec. 24—John Scott Thompson and Mary E. Brock.

Dec. 26—Harry E. Haynes, New York City and Elizabeth D. Iverson.

Dec. 30—James D. Miller and Elizabeth M. Nerica.

The many friends of Mrs. L. H. Friedrich of 635 Briar Place, have been filled with anxiety while she has been in the hospital undergoing a serious operation. We are happy to report that she is holding her own and getting along as well as can be expected. May health and strength enfold her and bring her back to us smiling and cheery as ever!

To have courage without pugnacity,
To have conviction without bigotry,
To have charity without condescension,
To have faith without credulity,
To have love of humanity without mere sentimentality,
To have meekness with power,
And emotion with sanity—
That is Christianity.
—Charles E. Hughes.

RELIGION AS VISION

The religious man is like one on whom love has fallen. There is something now for him to live for far beyond anything he had ever before been able to imagine. He has discerned something surpassingly lovely and alluring which stirs the deepest passions of joy and devotion in those who have found it. It is that which captivates the lives of men and enthralls beyond any other beauty or any other good. It is God.

Religion is not merely a belief. It is a vision and a certainty. It is possible to have certainty without vision; and religion requires vision. A man must not only be certain this object exists: he must have vision of it. That means he must have such appreciation of this subject that it transforms his life, glorifies his world and fills him with great enthusiasm for life. He must not only be intellectually persuaded but emotionally stirred; not only cognize the fact but discern its value and catch its significance. He must so realize it that it wins his devotion and shapes his will. To have this appreciation of the Divine Object, and thus to feel the stimulus of it, is to have what we call the vision of it, vision involves emotion, imagination, and conversion of the will in devoted self-surrender.

To be religious is to be vividly cognizant and fully responsive to the fact that the universe does contain Something which is of more value than anything else, and to be stirred to joy and enthusiasm by that fact.—H. N. Wieman, Professor in the Divinity School, University of Chicago.

THE GREAT GODS PASS

The great Gods pass through the great Time-hall,
Stately and high;
The little men climb the low clay wall
To gape and spy;
"We wait for the Gods," the little men cry,
"But these are our brothers passing by."

The great Gods pass through the great Time-hall,
With veiled grace;
The little men crowd the low clay wall
To bow the face;
"But still are our brothers passing by.
Why tarry the Gods?" the little men sigh.

The great Gods pass through the great Time-hall,
Who can may see.
The little men nod by the low clay wall,
So tired they be;
" 'Tis weary waiting for Gods," they yawn,
"There's a world of men, but the Gods are gone."

By A. H. Begbie,
—From "The Rosebud Wall.

WORDS OF ASPIRATION

Spoken by Rev. F. S. C. Wicks

Grateful we for the many blessings that fill our lives, blessings beyond our desert; grateful we for the love and the truth and the goodness that have come to enrich our lives and made them beautiful in the sight of the divine; but above all, we are grateful this morning for the tie that binds us one to another in the bonds of friendship, that make for us the chief blessing of life; and our one prayer would be that we shall be worthy of friendship; that we shall be worthy of the faith and the trust and confidence that our friends have in us; that we will not disappoint their expectations, that we will fulfill their thoughts of us. Then there will come to us an inspiration to be our best each day, not simply that it brings happiness to ourselves, but it brings joy to our friends. Thus sustained and strengthened by what comes to us from others, we shall walk the ways of life uprightly and we shall find each day new sources of blessings and happiness. Amen.

"We are not here to upbuild a sect or proclaim a creed. We are here merely to help people live happier and more useful lives. We do not build our church on its members' dread of what they cannot understand; or their fear of a possibly malicious Almighty.

"We wish to put our souls in direct harmony with the sources of divine power. We desire to free our fellowmen from the wear and dread of the unknown that have so long shadowed human lives. And for the rivalries of sects we wish to substitute a true fraternalship of democratic religion. We wish to rationalize, moralize, democratize and spiritualize the lives of mankind in this tumultuous generation." — Samuel A. Eliot.

FROM "A FREE MAN'S WORSHIP"

By Bertrand Russell

The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few may hope to reach, and where none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent Death. Very brief is the time in which we can help them, in which their happiness or misery is decided. Be it ours to shed sunshine on their path, to lighten their sorrows by the balm of sympathy, to give them the pure joy of a never-tiring affection, to strengthen failing courage, to instill faith in hours of despair. Let us not weigh in grudging scales their merits and demerits, but let us think only of their need—of the sorrows, the difficulties, perhaps the blindnesses, that make the misery of their lives; let us remember that they are fellow-sufferers in the same darkness, actors in the same tragedy with ourselves. And so, when their day is over, when their good and their evil have become eternal by the immortality of the past, be it ours to feel that, where they suffered, where they failed, no deed of ours was the cause; but wherever a spark of the divine fire kindled in their hearts, we were ready with encouragement, with sympathy, with brave words in which high courage glowed.

SILVERY MORNINGS

Last night a Smith came and with deft skill whitened the earth, like a noble head grown grey with grace of manner and beauty of soul. How exquisite a few chill nights can make our brown, dried earth weary from summer cares, as she gathers her many children into her warm bosom, covering them with

leaves! Frost is nature's silver-tongued language, persuading trees to send their sap down into thirsty roots so they may be nourished during the long, cold winter months.

Every life has its frosts; some there be that kill the bright blossoms of our dearest plans, or blight our tender leaves of faith. When stripped bare of all that made us useful in the world and acceptable to our friends, we lament the cruelty of the frost. Yet, may it not be that this experience is a Voice urging us to send the spirit of our life down into the unseen roots of our souls, that they may be nourished from within, rather than without, where so many seek to feed their lives? O, thank God for whitened, silvery mornings!—W. Waldeman W. Argow, The Peoples Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

THE SERVICE OF THIS CHURCH TO THE CHILDREN

It is no accident that the Unitarian people rely upon educational methods for the advancement of liberal Christianity. Take any subject, find out the truth about it and you have Unitarian doctrine. All the influence of the passionate seekers after truth in every science and department of research makes for intelligence, for rational thinking, for liberal religious views.

Liberal influences are most potent when the mind is young and unformed. This is the time to give them a bias in the direction of truth, beauty and goodness. Consequently, nothing that any church does is of more importance than the kind of religious education it gives to its children. Do not let the name "Sunday School" make you think lightly of our religious school because you may once have had poor teaching in an institution of that name. Things are different now. We aim to supplement the home and school in laying the foundations of character, by ethical instruction clear in idea and noble in spirit, and to put the children in possession of the highest and finest religious conceptions the world in its long climb has thus far reached. They are taught to read the Bible in the light of scholarship, to appreciate and be loyal to all that is true and inspiring in Christianity and to be uncompromising in their devotion to truth, yet reverent of all that deserves to be revered.—From the Church of the Unity, St. Louis.

INTELLIGENCE IN RELIGION

Intelligence in religion is bound up with earnest intelligent behavior. Intelligence, however, in religion is not looked upon very favorably yet; it is not made to feel that it is a welcome guest. There is no adequate understanding of its importance, or of how vital it is to race advance. Do you realize that it is entirely possible that we may drop into a lower level of human life, and even see a collapse or wiping out of civilization? There must be a waking up and a realization of the tremendous issue on the part of thousands. We must reach intelligent spiritual ideas and make them the very center of our lives. Nothing less than a calm but earnest fighting spirit can justify being a Unitarian in behalf of this cause. It is his cause. Side-line loafing and complacency are altogether unworthy of the momentous issue going on in the arena of life in this our day. The trilobite was king of creation in its day, and then vanished without descendants. In past ages, there were plants on this earth far superior to the present breeds. They passed away, and our present day plants came from a succeeding inferior stock. The progress of life was vastly retarded. The same thing can happen to our race unless we make it our religion to do a man's job with our knowledge and ideals.—The Denver Unitarian.

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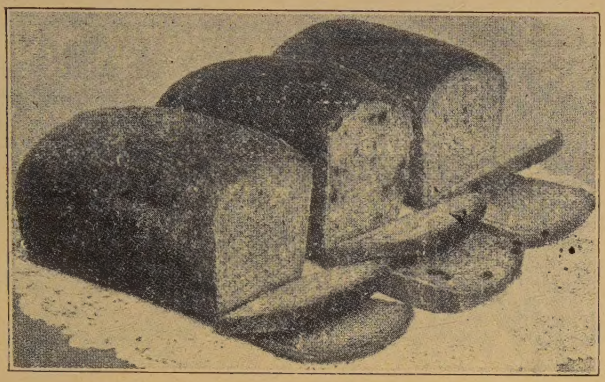

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